under the age of 5 years die every year. Major causes of child mortality include pre-mature birth, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoeal diseases and vaccine preventable diseases. Contributory factors, *inter-alia*, include high prevalence of low birth weight babies and high malnutrition rates in children. Under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme, immunization against six vaccine preventable diseases, facilities for appropriate management of acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases and essential new born care are provided. Promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding practices, and prophylaxis against vitamin-a and iron deficiencies are being provided to improve nutritional status of children.

Supreme Court's Direction on Pre-Natal Diagnostic Technique Act

1575. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, with the rising scale of femicide, the Supreme Court had recently directed Government to strictly enforce the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, and if needed, to amend the Act to plug any loopholes;

(b) if so, the gravity of the situation according to the assessment made, if any, by Government; and

(c) the steps contemplated by Government in view of the Supreme Court directive?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) the Supreme Court in a Public Interest Litigation filed by Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT) & Ors Vs. Union of India and Others, has issued directions on 4th May, 2001 to the Central Government, State Governments, and appropriate Authorities to take steps for effective implementation of the Act. The Supreme Court has also directed Central Supervisory Board to examine the necessity to amend the Act keeping in mind emerging technologies and difficulties encountered in implementation of the Act and to make recommendations to the Central Government.

(b) Despite the existence of the law [Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994, in force since 1.1.1996] banning the determination of the sex of the foetues and subsequent abortion of female foetus, only a few cases of female foeticide have been reported, though the provisional figures of Census 2001 indicate that the sex ratio in 0—6 age group has come down drastically, particularly in the states of Punjab, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi.

(c) To create public awareness against the practice of pre-natal determination of sex and female foeticide and to implement the provisions of the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 (PNDT Act), intensified activities have been undertaken through print and electronic media.

Non-Government Organisations are also being involved for generating awareness among the masses, including service providers and law enforcing agencies about the provisions of the P.N.D.T. Act.

All the States/UTs have been advised to take necessary action for the effective implementation of the PNDT Act. A meeting of the Appropriate Authorities in all States/Districts have been held to sensitize them about the gravity of the situation and to take steps to implement the provisions of the Act in earnestness.

A Technical Sub-Committee under the Central Supervisory Board has been constituted to examine the possibility of amending the P.N.D.T. Act keeping in view the emerging technologies and to eliminate the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the Act.

UN General Assembly's Ambitions Battle Plan for HIV/AIDS

1576. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the UN General Assembly has drawn up and announced an ambitious battle plan for controlling HIV/AIDS and has called upon all the member countries to extend their effective participation/coopertion in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have drawn up any blue print to fight this menace and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken for the effective implementation of the strategies to eliminate the disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A declaration of commitment for HIV/AIDS was adopted in the UN General Assembly's Special Session on HIV/AIDS in New York on the 25th to 27th June, 2001. The detailed declaration is given in Annexure [*See* Appendix 193 Annexure No. 13]

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The National AIDS Control Programme Phase-II covers all the aspects of HIV/AIDS prevention and control. The key components are: